

# JUDITH

## 1

### King Nebuchadnezzar Goes to War Against King Arphaxad

**1** When King Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled Assyria from the magnificent city of Nineveh, was in his twelfth year as king, Arphaxad ruled the Medes from the city of Ecbatana. **2** Arphaxad had built a wall around Ecbatana. The wall was made from stone blocks that were 4½ feet wide and 9 feet long. The wall was 105 feet high and 75 feet wide. **3** At the city gates he built towers that were 90 feet wide at the base and 150 feet high. **4** He made the gates 105 feet high and 60 feet wide so that his powerful army could march out with the infantry in battle formation.

**5** At that time, King Nebuchadnezzar went to war against King Arphaxad in the Great Plain in the region of Ragau. **6** All the people who lived in the mountains, all those who lived along the Euphrates, Tigris, and Hydaspes Rivers, and all those who lived on the plain ruled by Arioch, king of the Elymeans, joined forces with King Arphaxad to oppose King Nebuchadnezzar. Many nations joined forces with Cheleoud's descendants<sup>a</sup> to fight King Nebuchadnezzar.

**7** Then King Nebuchadnezzar of Assyria sent messengers (to order others to join forces with him against King Arphaxad). He sent messengers to all the people who lived in Persia and in the west: to Cilicia and Damascus, Lebanon and Antilebanon, to all the people who lived along the coast, **8** and to the people who lived in Carmel and Gilead. He also sent messengers to northern Galilee, to the large plain named Esdraelon, **9** to everyone who lived in the cities of Samaria, and to the people who lived west of the Jordan River as far as the cities of Jerusalem, Betane, Chelous, and Kadesh. The messengers were also sent as far as the River of Egypt, Tahpanhes, Rameses, and the whole region of Goshen. **10** They went to all the people who lived in Egypt, even to those who lived beyond Tanis and Memphis as far as the border of Ethiopia.

**11** But everyone who lived in those areas despised the orders of King Nebuchadnezzar of Assyria. They refused to join him in the war because they weren't afraid of him. They didn't think that he was anyone special. So they disgraced his messengers by sending them back empty-handed.

**12** Nebuchadnezzar became very angry with this entire region. So he swore an oath by his throne and kingdom. He swore that he would punish the entire region by killing all the people who lived in Cilicia, Damascus and Syria, Moab, Ammon, Judea, and Egypt, as far as the region of the two seas.

**13** In Nebuchadnezzar's seventeenth year as king, he led his army against King Arphaxad. He defeated King Arphaxad in battle and destroyed his cavalry and chariots—his entire army. **14** Then Nebuchadnezzar took possession of the cities that Arphaxad had controlled. When he came to Ecbatana, he took control of its towers, looted its marketplaces, and disgraced that beautiful city. **15** He captured Arphaxad in the mountains of Ragau and killed him that same day with a spear.

**16** Then Nebuchadnezzar and his entire army returned to Nineveh with all the loot. His army was very large and was made up of soldiers from many nations. In Nineveh, Nebuchadnezzar and his army rested and feasted for four months.

## 2

### King Nebuchadnezzar Plans a War Against the West

**1** King Nebuchadnezzar of Assyria had promised to punish the entire western region. On the twenty-second day of the first month of Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year as king, the subject of this punishment came up in the palace. **2** King Nebuchadnezzar called a meeting of all his advisers and top officials to present his secret plan to them. He personally told

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<sup>a</sup> 1:6 Greek meaning of "Cheleoud's descendants" uncertain.

them how the people in that region had openly disobeyed him. <sup>3</sup> So they decided to destroy everyone who had not obeyed the king's orders.

<sup>4</sup> When King Nebuchadnezzar of Assyria had finished presenting his plan, he called Holofernes. Holofernes was the highest-ranking general in Nebuchadnezzar's army and was second in rank to the king. Nebuchadnezzar told him, <sup>5</sup> "This is what I, Nebuchadnezzar, the great king and the lord of the whole world, say: Leave here, and take with you strong, confident soldiers: 120,000 from the infantry and 12,000 from the cavalry. <sup>6</sup> Attack all the people in the western region, because they have disobeyed my orders. <sup>7</sup> Tell the people there to be ready to surrender unconditionally because I'm furious and I'm going to attack them. My army will cover their whole territory and will loot everything they own. <sup>8</sup> I will fill the ravines with their wounded. All the streams and rivers will overflow with dead bodies. <sup>9</sup> Then I will capture the people [who are still alive] and lead them away to the ends of the earth.

<sup>10</sup> "Holofernes, first invade their territory, and take possession of it for me. Make them surrender to you, and hold them for me until the time comes for me to punish them. <sup>11</sup> Throughout the entire region under your command, slaughter those who refuse to obey you, and loot their property. <sup>12</sup> As I live and by the power of my kingdom, I will do everything I have promised. <sup>13</sup> Holofernes, don't make any mistakes in what I, your lord, have ordered you to do. Carry out my orders exactly as I have told you, and do it quickly."

<sup>14</sup> So Holofernes left Nebuchadnezzar and summoned all the commanders, generals, and officers of the Assyrian army. <sup>15</sup> He picked the best soldiers for his army as Nebuchadnezzar had ordered: 120,000 infantrymen and 12,000 archers, who rode horses. <sup>16</sup> He organized them as all great armies are organized for war. <sup>17</sup> He took along a large number of camels, donkeys, and mules to carry their supplies, and he took countless sheep, oxen, and goats for food. <sup>18</sup> He also had plenty of rations for every soldier and a very large amount of gold and silver from the royal palace.

## Holofernes Leads His Army Against the West

<sup>19</sup> Then Holofernes and his entire army set out to go ahead of King Nebuchadnezzar and to cover the entire western region with their chariots, cavalry, and best infantrymen. <sup>20</sup> Many other people went along with the army. They looked like a swarm of locusts or like the dust on the earth. No one was able to count the people because there were so many.

<sup>21</sup> Three days after the army left Nineveh, it arrived in the plain of Bectileth. The army moved from Bectileth and camped at the mountains to the north of Cilicia. <sup>22</sup> From there Holofernes took his entire army—his infantry, cavalry, and chariots—and advanced to the mountain region. <sup>23</sup> He destroyed Put and Lud and looted all the possessions of the Rassisites and the Ishmaelites who lived on the edge of the desert, south of Cheleon.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Then Holofernes followed the Euphrates River, went through Mesopotamia, and leveled every fortified city along the Abron River until he came to the sea. <sup>25</sup> He took possession of the territory of Cilicia and massacred everyone who opposed him. Then he advanced to the southern territory of Japheth, which bordered Arabia. <sup>26</sup> He surrounded all the Midianites, set their tents on fire, and took the sheep from their pens. <sup>27</sup> He went down into the plain of Damascus during the wheat harvest. He set every field on fire, destroyed the flocks and herds, looted the cities, stripped the land, and killed all the young men.

<sup>28</sup> So the people who lived in the cities along the coast (in Sidon and Tyre, in Sur and Ocina, and all who lived in Jannia) were overcome with fear and trembling because of Holofernes. The people who lived in the cities of Azotus and Ashkelon were also very afraid of him.

## 3

## The West Surrenders to Nebuchadnezzar

<sup>1</sup> The people in the west sent messengers to Holofernes to ask for peace. They said, <sup>2</sup> "We are the servants of the great king, Nebuchadnezzar. We bow on the ground in front of you. Treat us as you please. <sup>3</sup> Our buildings, all our land, all

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<sup>b</sup> 2:23 Greek meaning uncertain.

our wheat fields, our flocks and herds, and all the sheep pens where we camp are at your service. Use them as you please.

**4** Our cities and all the people who live in them are also at your service. Come and visit them whenever you want.”

## Holofernes Continues to Destroy the West

**5** After the messengers went to Holofernes and asked him for peace, **6** Holofernes went down to the coast with his army. He stationed troops in the fortified cities and took the best men from those cities to be soldiers in his army. **7** The people along the coast and all the people in the surrounding territories welcomed Holofernes. They presented him with flowers and danced to the beat of drums. **8** Yet, Holofernes completely destroyed all their worship sites<sup>c</sup> and cut down their poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah. He even destroyed all the gods in the land. He did this so that all the nations would worship only Nebuchadnezzar and so that all people, regardless of their languages and the tribes they belonged to, would pray to Nebuchadnezzar as god.

**9** Then Holofernes traveled through the plain of Esdraelon and passed near the city of Dothan. Dothan borders the huge mountain range in Judea. **10** He camped between the cities of Geba and Scythopolis and stayed there for an entire month in order to collect all the supplies his army needed.

**4**

## The Israelites Prepare for War

**1** The Israelites who lived in Judea heard that Holofernes, the highest-ranking general under King Nebuchadnezzar of Assyria, had looted and destroyed all the other nations' temples. **2** So they were terrified of Holofernes and were worried about Jerusalem and the temple of the Lord their God. **3** They had recently returned from exile. All the people of Judea had just reunited and rededicated the holy utensils, the altar, and the temple, which had been dishonored. **4** So the Israelites sent messengers to every region—to Samaria, Kona, Beth Horon, Belmain, and Jericho, to Choba and Aesora, and to the valley of Salem. **5** They quickly stationed troops on all the high hills, fortified the villages there, and stored up food in order to prepare for war. (They were able to store food because they had recently harvested their fields.)

**6** Joakim, who was the chief priest in Jerusalem at the time, wrote to the people in the cities of Bethulia and Betomesthaim, which borders Esdraelon along the plain near Dothan. **7** He told them to occupy the mountain passes because the enemy would use these passes to enter Judea. He also told the people that they would easily be able to stop the enemy from advancing through the passes since the passes were only wide enough for two men to enter at a time. **8** So the Israelites followed the orders that they received from the chief priest Joakim and the council, which represented all the people of Israel and was in session in Jerusalem.

**9** With intense devotion the men of Israel prayed loudly to God and humbled themselves. **10** They, their wives, their children, and their cattle wore sackcloth. Every foreign resident, hired worker, and slave also wore sackcloth. **11** Every man, woman, and child living in Jerusalem bowed in front of the temple. They covered their heads with ashes and spread out their sackcloth in the Lord's presence. **12** They even covered the altar with sackcloth. With intense devotion all of them prayed loudly together to the God of Israel. They didn't want their children or wives to be captured and carried off like loot or the towns they had inherited to be destroyed. They also didn't want foreigners to dishonor and disgrace the holy place by making it an object of ridicule. **13** The Lord heard their prayers and saw their distress.

The people fasted for many days throughout Judea. In Jerusalem they fasted in front of the holy place of the Lord Almighty. **14** The chief priest Joakim and all the priests who served the Lord wore sackcloth. They sacrificed the daily burnt offerings, the offerings made to fulfill vows, and the freewill offerings from the people. **15** They put ashes on their turbans and prayed as loudly as they could for the Lord to be kind to all the people of Israel.

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<sup>c</sup> 3:8 Syriac; Greek “territories.”

# 5

## Holofernes Summons All the Rulers

<sup>1</sup> Holofernes, the highest-ranking general in the Assyrian army, received a report that the Israelites had prepared for war by closing off the mountain passes, fortifying all the high hills, and setting traps in the plains. <sup>2</sup> This made Holofernes very angry. He summoned all the rulers in Moab, the leaders in Ammon, and all the governors on the coast to his headquarters. <sup>3</sup> He said to them, "Canaanites, give me a report. Who are these people living in the mountains? Which cities do they live in? How big is their army? What do they rely on for their power and strength? Does their king lead their army? <sup>4</sup> Why are they the only people in the west to turn their backs on me and refuse to come out and meet me?"

## Achior's Speech

<sup>5</sup> Then Achior, the governor of all the Ammonites, said to him, "Sir, please listen to me. I'll tell you the truth about the Israelites, these people who live in the mountains near your camp. I won't lie to you. <sup>6</sup> These people are descendants of the Chaldeans. <sup>7</sup> But because they didn't want to follow the gods of their ancestors, who lived in Chaldea, they moved to Mesopotamia. <sup>8</sup> (They had abandoned the religion of their ancestors and had begun to worship the God of heaven, the God they had come to know. They were forced to leave because they had rejected the gods of Chaldea. So they went to Mesopotamia, where they lived for a long time.)

<sup>9</sup> "Later, their God told them to leave Mesopotamia and go to Canaan. They settled in Canaan, became very wealthy, and accumulated a lot of livestock. <sup>10</sup> However, when a famine spread throughout Canaan, they went to Egypt and stayed there as long as they had food. While in Egypt, they became so numerous that they couldn't be counted. <sup>11</sup> So the king of Egypt became hostile toward them. He was shrewd in the way he took advantage of them by forcing them to make bricks. The Egyptians humiliated them by making them slaves. <sup>12</sup> But the Israelites prayed to their God, and their God struck the entire land of Egypt with plagues for which there were no cures. So the Egyptians forced them out of Egypt. <sup>13</sup> Then God dried up the Red Sea in front of the Israelites <sup>14</sup> and brought them all the way to Sinai and Kadesh Barnea.

"The Israelites forced out all the people who lived in the desert <sup>15</sup> and began to live in Amorite territory. They were so strong that they destroyed all the people who lived in the city of Heshbon. They crossed the Jordan River, took possession of all the mountains, <sup>16</sup> and forced out the Canaanites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Shechemites, and all the Girgashites, all of whom had lived in Canaan for a long time.

<sup>17</sup> "As long as they didn't sin in the sight of their God, they prospered because their God, who hates any kind of wickedness, was with them. <sup>18</sup> But whenever they rebelled against the way God had arranged for them to live, they were defeated in many wars. Eventually, they were led away as prisoners to a foreign country, the temple of their God was leveled, and their enemies took control of their cities. <sup>19</sup> But now that they have returned to their God, they have come back from the places where they were scattered. They have again taken possession of Jerusalem, where they have their holy place, and have settled in the mountains, where no one was living.

<sup>20</sup> "Sir, maybe these people are sinning against their God without knowing it. If we can find out that they are sinning, then we can attack them and force them to fight. <sup>21</sup> But, sir, if these people aren't guilty of any sin, then I'd advise you not to attack them. I'm afraid that their Lord and God might defend them and that we will be disgraced in front of the whole world."

## Reaction to Achior's Speech

<sup>22</sup> When Achior had finished speaking, all the people standing around the headquarters began to complain. Holofernes' top officials and all those from the coast and from Moab demanded that Achior be put to death. <sup>23</sup> They said, "We're not afraid of the Israelites! They don't have a strong army. Their army isn't strong enough to put up a fight. <sup>24</sup> General Holofernes, let's attack them. Your powerful army will wipe them out."

# 6

## Holofernes' Speech

**1** When the crowd standing around the headquarters became quiet, Holofernes, the highest-ranking general in the Assyrian army, spoke to Achior<sup>d</sup> in front of all the rulers from Moab and all the foreigners. He said, **2** "Achior, who do you and your mercenaries from Ephraim think you are? You've prophesied among us today. You've told us not to fight against the people of Israel because their God will defend them. Is there any other god besides Nebuchadnezzar? Nebuchadnezzar will send his forces and wipe the people of Israel off the face of the earth. Their God can't save them. **3** But we are King Nebuchadnezzar's servants. We will destroy the people of Israel as if they were only one man. They won't be able to withstand our powerful cavalry. **4** Our cavalry alone can beat them. The mountains will be drenched with their blood. The fields will be filled with their dead bodies. Nothing will be left of them after our attack. We will totally destroy them. This is what King Nebuchadnezzar, the lord of the whole world, predicts. When Nebuchadnezzar predicts something, his prediction comes true.

**5** "As for you, Achior, you Ammonite mercenary, you've spoken to me for the last time. You won't see me again until I punish these people who came out of Egypt. **6** When the battle is over, my army and my advisers will kill you with their swords. You will die with Israel's wounded.

**7** "My servants are now going to take you into the mountains and leave you in a city located in one of the passes. **8** You will die there along with the Israelites. **9** If you really believe that their cities won't be captured, then don't look so depressed. I have spoken, and not a word of what I've said will fail to come true."

## Achior Arrives at the City of Bethulia

**10** Then Holofernes ordered the servants who were at the headquarters to arrest Achior, take him to the city of Bethulia, and hand him over to the Israelites. **11** So his servants arrested Achior and led him out of the camp into the plain. From the plain they took Achior into the mountains as far as the spring that was below the city of Bethulia.

**12** When the men of Bethulia saw them coming, they grabbed their weapons and ran out of the city to the top of the mountain. All the men used their slings to hurl stones at Holofernes' servants and kept the servants from coming up the pass.

**13** So Holofernes' servants took cover at the foot of the mountain. Then they tied up Achior, left him there, and returned to the general.

**14** Later, some Israelites came down from Bethulia and found Achior. They untied him, brought him back to the city, and made him stand in front of the city leaders. **15** At that time the leaders were Uzziah (who was the son of Micah and was from the tribe of Simeon), Chabris (who was the son of Gothoniel), and Charmis (who was the son of Melchiel). **16** They summoned all the older leaders of the city. All the women and young men also ran to the assembly. The leaders made Achior stand in the middle of all the people. Then Uzziah questioned him about what had happened. **17** Achior told them what had happened at Holofernes' headquarters. He told them everything that he had said in the presence of the Assyrian leaders and everything that Holofernes had bragged he would do to the people of Israel.

**18** Then the people bowed to worship God and prayed loudly. **19** "Lord God of heaven, notice the arrogance of the Assyrians. Show mercy to our people because the Assyrians are humiliating them. Be kind to your holy people today."

**20** Then the people comforted Achior and praised him highly. **21** When the assembly was over, Uzziah took Achior home with him and served dinner to the older leaders. All night long they prayed to the God of Israel for help.

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<sup>d</sup> 6:1 Some Greek manuscripts add "and to all the people from Moab."

## Holofernes Goes to War Against Bethulia

**1** The next day, Holofernes gave an order to his entire army and to all the soldiers who had become his allies. He ordered them to march to the city of Bethulia, to seize the passes that led into the mountains, and to go to war against the Israelites. **2** So on that day, all the soldiers marched to Bethulia. The Assyrian army had 170,000 soldiers in the infantry and 12,000 in the cavalry. This didn't include the soldiers who were in charge of supplies. The entire army was extremely large.

**3** The army set up camp by the spring in the valley near Bethulia. The camp was so wide that it covered the area from Dothan to Balbaim, and it was so long that it extended from Bethulia to Cyamon, which faces Esdraelon.

**4** When the Israelites saw the size of the Assyrian army, they were worried. They said to each other, "This army is going to eat everything in the entire region. The high mountains, the ravines, and the hills don't have enough food to feed all those soldiers." **5** Even though all the people of Bethulia were worried, they grabbed their weapons, started signal fires on the watchtowers, and remained on guard all that night.

**6** The next day, Holofernes led out his entire cavalry so that the people of Bethulia could see it. **7** He inspected the passes that led to their city and the spring that supplied their water. He took possession of the spring, stationed soldiers there to guard it, and returned to his army.

**8** Then all the rulers of Edom,<sup>e</sup> all the governors of the Moabites, and the commanders from the coast went to Holofernes and said, **9** "You're our general. Please listen to us so that your army won't suffer any casualties. **10** These Israelite people don't rely on their weapons to protect them. Instead, they rely on the height of the mountains where they live, because the climb to the top of their mountains is very difficult. **11** So, General, don't use regular battle formations to fight them. In this way, not one soldier in your army will be killed. **12** Stay in your camp, and keep every soldier in your army there. Let some of us take possession of the spring that is at the bottom of the mountain, **13** because that's where all the people who live in Bethulia get their water. Then, when they're about to die of thirst, they'll surrender. We'll go up the neighboring mountaintops with our troops and camp there to prevent anyone from getting out of the city. **14** Men, women, and children will starve to death. Before the war ever begins, they will be lying all over the streets. **15** This is how you can pay them back for rebelling against you and for refusing to come out and meet you peacefully."

**16** What they said pleased Holofernes and all his advisers. So Holofernes gave orders to do as they suggested. **17** A company of Ammonite soldiers, together with 5,000 Assyrians, moved out and camped in the valley. They took possession of the spring where the Israelites got their water. **18** Soldiers from Edom and Ammon went into the mountains and camped facing Dothan. They sent some of their troops to the southeast toward the city of Egrebel. Egrebel is near Chusi, which is beside the Mochmur River. The rest of the Assyrian army camped on the plain and covered all of it. The tents and supplies also covered a large area since there were so many of them.

**19** The Israelites prayed loudly to the Lord their God because they lost their courage when they saw that all their enemies had surrounded them and that there was no way to escape. **20** The entire Assyrian army—infantry, chariots, and cavalry—surrounded them for 34 days. By that time everyone who lived in Bethulia had run out of water. **21** The cisterns were going dry. Because the people had to ration their water, they couldn't quench their thirst. **22** Their children had no energy. Women and young people were fainting from thirst and were collapsing in the entrances to the city and in the city streets because they had become so weak.

**23** Then everyone, including the young people, the women, and the children, gathered around Uzziah and the city leaders. They shouted at the older leaders, **24** "You made a big mistake when you didn't make peace with the Assyrians. May God decide whether you were right or wrong. **25** We don't have anyone to help us now. God has handed us over to them. They will find us lying on the ground and dying of thirst. **26** Get the Assyrians right away! Surrender to Holofernes and his entire army, and let them loot the city. **27** We would be better off as captives. They will make us slaves, but at least we will be alive, and we won't have to see our infants die and our wives and children breathe their last breath. **28** God is punishing us

<sup>e</sup> 7:8 Or "Esau." Esau was the son of Isaac and the ancestor of the people of Edom.

for our sins and for the sins of our ancestors. Heaven, earth, and our God, the Lord of our ancestors, are our witnesses. We beg you: Please do today what we have asked.”

**29** Everyone in the assembly began to cry together and pray loudly to the Lord God. **30** Then Uzziah said to them, “Cheer up, brothers and sisters! Let’s hold out for five more days. By then the Lord our God will show us his mercy. He won’t abandon us forever. **31** But if five days go by and we don’t get any help, I’ll do as you say.”

**32** Then Uzziah made the men take their positions on the walls and towers of their city, and he sent the women and children home. The people in the city felt depressed.

## 8

### A Description of Judith

**1** At that time, Judith heard what was happening at the assembly. Judith was the daughter of Merari. Merari was the son of Ox, the grandson of Joseph, the great-grandson of Oziel, and a descendant of Elkhiah, Ananias, Gideon, Raphain, Ahitub, Elijah, Hilkhiah, Eliab, Nathanael, Salamiel, Sarasadai, and Israel. **2** Judith had been married to Manasseh, who belonged to her tribe and family. He died during the barley harvest. **3** While Manasseh was supervising workers who were tying up bundles of barley in the field, he suffered sunstroke and was forced to stay in bed. Later, he died in his hometown, Bethulia, and was buried in the family tomb in the field between Dothan and Balamon.

**4** Judith had been a widow for three years and four months. **5** She built a shelter for herself on the roof of her house. She wore sackcloth around her waist and always dressed as a widow. **6** She fasted every day that she had been a widow except for Fridays, the weekly days of worship, the New Moon Festivals, the day before the New Moon Festivals, and the annual festivals of the people of Israel.

**7** She was very attractive and had a beautiful figure. She managed all the money, slaves, livestock, and fields that her husband Manasseh had left her. **8** No one ever said anything bad about her, because she was a God-fearing woman.

### Judith Meets With the Leaders of Bethulia

**9** Judith heard about the horrible things that the people had said to their leader Uzziah because they were discouraged by the lack of water. She also heard about everything that Uzziah had said to the people, especially how he had promised under oath to surrender to the Assyrians after five days. **10** So she sent a female slave, whom she had put in charge of all her possessions, to invite Uzziah, Chabris, and Charmis (the older leaders of the city) to her home.

**11** When the leaders arrived, Judith said to them, “Leaders of the people of Bethulia, please listen to me. What you said in front of the people today wasn’t right. You made a promise to God. You promised that you would surrender to our enemies if the Lord didn’t help us within five days. **12** Who do you think you are? You are testing God and taking the place of God in human affairs. **13** Today you’re putting the Lord Almighty on trial. Can’t you understand that? **14** You can’t discover how deep human feelings go or even grasp how the human mind works. So how will you ever figure out God, who made everything? How will you ever understand the way his mind works or comprehend the way he thinks?

“Friends, don’t ever make the Lord our God angry. **15** What if he doesn’t want to help us within five days? He has the right to protect us whenever he pleases or to destroy us in front of our enemies. **16** Stop dictating to the Lord our God what he should do, as if he were forced to do it. You can’t force God to make promises like you can humans or talk him out of something like you can other people. **17** Instead, while we wait for him to save us, pray to him so that he will help us. He will listen to us if we pray for what pleases him.

**18** “At no point in our recent past or at the present time have we had any tribe, family, town, or city that worships gods made by humans as our ancestors did. **19** That’s why our ancestors were overwhelmed with disasters and were handed over to their enemies, who killed them in battle and looted their properties. **20** But we don’t acknowledge any god except the Lord. So we can be sure that he won’t ignore us or anyone from our nation. **21** If we are captured, all Judea will be captured. Our holy place will be looted, and the Lord will make us pay with our lives for allowing it to be dishonored. **22** Wherever we are scattered among the nations, he will hold us responsible for the slaughter of our people and for the

capture and destruction of the land we've inherited. We will be despised and disgraced by those who own us. **23** Our slavery won't have a happy ending. Instead, the Lord our God will make our slavery end in disgrace.

**24** "Friends, today we must set an example for our people because their lives depend on us. Also, what happens to the holy place, especially the temple and the altar, depends on us. **25** Furthermore, we must thank the Lord our God because he is testing us as he tested our ancestors. **26** Remember everything he did with Abraham. Remember how he tested Isaac, and remember what happened to Jacob while he was working as a shepherd for his uncle Laban in Syrian Mesopotamia. **27** The Lord isn't putting us through a severe trial as he did our ancestors. He isn't punishing us. Instead, the Lord disciplines those who are close to him in order to warn them."

**28** Then Uzziah said to her, "Everything you've said is true. No one can possibly disagree with you. **29** Today is not the first time you have shown your wisdom. Ever since you were young, people have recognized that you are good at understanding things. **30** However, the people were so thirsty that they forced us to make a promise to them and to take an oath that we cannot break. **31** Since you're a very religious woman, pray for us today. Ask the Lord to send rain to fill our cisterns. Then we won't faint from thirst any longer."

**32** Then Judith said to them, "Listen to me. I'm going to do something that our people will never forget. **33** Be at the city gate tonight so that I can leave with my female slave. Before the day arrives, the day on which you have promised to surrender to our enemies, the Lord will use me to rescue Israel. **34** But don't try to find out what I'm doing. I won't tell you until I've finished what I'm going to do."

**35** Uzziah and the leaders said to her, "May the Lord God go with you and guide you so that you can punish our enemies." **36** The men left Judith's rooftop shelter and went back to their positions on the city walls and towers.

## 9

### Judith's Prayer

**1** When the evening incense was being offered at God's temple in Jerusalem, Judith bowed, put ashes on her head, and uncovered the sackcloth she was wearing [around her waist].

Then she prayed loudly to the Lord. **2** "Lord God of my ancestor Simeon, you gave Simeon a sword with which to punish the foreigners who had raped a virgin and dishonored her. She was ashamed and disgraced because they humiliated her by having sexual intercourse with her. You had said that something like this must never happen. Yet, they did it anyway.

**3** So you allowed their leaders to be slaughtered. You allowed the bed on which they had committed this terrible sin to become soaked with their blood. You killed servants and princes alike. **4** You allowed their wives to become captives and their daughters to become slaves. You let their possessions be divided among the people you loved, the people who were devoted to you. Your people couldn't stand having a mixed bloodline, so they prayed to you for help. God, my God, I am a widow. Listen to me too.

**5** "You made those things happen as well as what happened before and after. You know what's happening now and what will happen in the future. Everything you have planned to do has happened. **6** The things you have planned offer themselves to you and say, 'Here we are!' Everything you've determined in advance is ready.

**7** "Look how the Assyrians have grown in power. They take pride in their horses and riders. They brag about the strength of their infantry and trust their shields, spears, bows, and slings. They don't realize that you are the Lord who defeats armies. The Lord is your name. **8** Use your power to break their strength. In your anger overthrow their government because they plan to dishonor your holy place. They plan to disgrace the tent where your glorious name lives and break off the horns of your altar with their weapons. **9** Look at how arrogant they are! Unleash your anger on them. Give me, a widow, the strength to carry out my plan. **10** By the deceitful things I say, kill the slaves with their leaders and the leaders with their servants. Give me, a woman, the power to destroy their pride.

**11** "Your strength doesn't depend on a large army. Your might doesn't depend on people in power. Instead, you are the God of humble people. You help oppressed people and support weak people. You protect those who are discouraged and save those who have no hope. **12** Please, God of my father, God of Israel's inheritance, Lord of heaven and earth, Creator of the oceans, King of all creation, please listen to my prayer. **13** Let what I say deceive those who have planned to do cruel

things to us. They plan to do away with your promise,<sup>f</sup> your holy temple (which you have given to your children), and Mount Zion. Let my words injure and wound my enemies. **14** Make every tribe in your entire nation know and understand that you are God, the all-powerful and mighty God, and that you are the only God who defends the people of Israel.”

## 10

### Judith Goes to the Assyrian Camp

**1** When Judith had finished praying loudly to the God of Israel, **2** she stood up from where she had been kneeling. She called her female slave and went down into the house where she spent her time on the weekly days of worship and on festival days. **3** She took off the sackcloth and the widow's clothes she was wearing and bathed. Then she put on expensive perfume, brushed her hair, tied a ribbon in it, and put on the clothes that she used to wear on joyful occasions while her husband Manasseh was still alive. **4** She put on her sandals, anklets, bracelets, rings, earrings, and all her other jewelry. Judith spent a lot of time putting on her make-up so that she would be attractive to all the men who would see her. **5** She had her slave carry a bottle of wine, a jar of oil, and a bag filled with roasted grain, dried fig cakes, and bread. The slave also carried dishes that Judith had wrapped up.

**6** Then the two women went to the city gate of Bethulia. There they met Uzziah and two of the city's older leaders, Chabris and Charmis. **7** When these men saw Judith wearing make-up and dressy clothes, they were stunned by her beauty. They said to her, **8** “May the God of our ancestors be kind to you and make your plans succeed. Then Jerusalem will be honored and the people of Israel will brag.” When Judith heard what the men said, she bowed to God.

**9** Judith said, “Order someone to open the city gate so that I can do what you said.” So they ordered some young men to open the gate for her as she requested. **10** When the gate was opened, Judith and her slave left the city. The men of the city watched her go down the mountain and through the valley until they couldn't see her anymore.

**11** The two women were going straight through the valley when an Assyrian patrol met them. **12** The soldiers in the patrol arrested Judith and questioned her, “What is your nationality? Where are you coming from, and where are you going?”

Judith answered, “I'm a Hebrew. I'm running away from my people because you're going to destroy them. **13** I'm on my way to see Holofernes, the general of your army, to give him some reliable information. I'll show him a way that he can take possession of the entire mountain region without a single man dying.”

**14** As the soldiers listened to what she said, they couldn't take their eyes off of her. When they saw how beautiful she was, they said to her, **15** “You've saved your life by hurrying to see our general. Go at once to his tent. Some of us will escort you there and introduce you to him. **16** When you stand in his presence, don't be afraid. Instead, tell him what you've just told us, and he'll treat you well.” **17** Then they chose 100 men to go with Judith and her slave. The men took the two women to Holofernes' tent.

**18** The entire camp became excited as the news of Judith's arrival spread from tent to tent. While some of the men who escorted Judith were telling Holofernes about her, soldiers gathered around her as she stood outside his tent. **19** The soldiers were stunned by her beauty and wondered about the people of Israel because of her. They said to each other, “How can we hate people who have women like this? We better not leave any of their men alive. If we let any of them get away, they could outsmart the whole world.”

### Judith Meets Holofernes

**20** Then Holofernes' bodyguards and all his advisers came out and led Judith into Holofernes' tent. **21** Holofernes was resting on his bed under a purple mosquito net that had gold, emeralds, and other precious stones woven into it. **22** When they told him about Judith, he went to the front part of the tent. Silver lamps were carried in front of him. **23** When Holofernes and his advisers saw Judith, all of them were stunned by her beauty. Judith bowed on the ground in front of Holofernes, but his servants made her get up.

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<sup>f</sup> 9:13 Or “They plan to destroy your covenant.”

# 11

<sup>1</sup> Then Holofernes said to Judith, "Cheer up! Don't be afraid, because I've never hurt anyone who chose to serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of the whole world. <sup>2</sup> If your people who live in the mountains hadn't despised me, I wouldn't have declared war on them. Certainly, they have brought this on themselves. <sup>3</sup> So tell me, why have you run away from your people and come over to our side? You're safe now. Cheer up! You'll live through the night and for a long time to come. <sup>4</sup> No one will hurt you. Instead, people will treat you well, as they do the other servants of King Nebuchadnezzar."

<sup>5</sup> Judith answered him, "Let me speak to you. You'll be happy to hear what I have to say. I won't give you any false information tonight. <sup>6</sup> If you follow my advice, God will accomplish something through you, and you won't fail to carry out God's plan. <sup>7</sup> I swear by the life and power of Nebuchadnezzar, who is king of the whole world and who sent you to enforce his policies on everyone. I swear that, because of you, not only people but also wild animals, cattle, and birds will serve him. Nebuchadnezzar and his administration will rule them. <sup>8</sup> We have heard about your wisdom and about the wonderful things you have done. The whole world knows that you are the bravest, most experienced, and most brilliant general in the entire kingdom.

<sup>9</sup> "We heard what Achior said to your council, because the people of Bethulia spared him. Achior told the people of Bethulia everything he said to you. <sup>10</sup> General Holofernes, don't ignore what Achior said. Keep it in mind because it's true. No one can punish my people or defeat them in war unless they sin against their God.

<sup>11</sup> "But now they're about to be caught in a sin. As soon as they disobey God's law, they will make him angry. So you're not going to fail or be unsuccessful, because they are going to die. <sup>12</sup> Since they have run out of food and water is scarce, they have planned to kill their livestock and eat everything that God has forbidden in his laws. <sup>13</sup> They have decided to eat the first grain harvested and to use the wine and oil that have been set apart as holy. These things have been dedicated to the priests who serve God in Jerusalem. Even touching these holy things is not allowed. <sup>14</sup> The people in Jerusalem have already been eating these things. The people of Bethulia have sent messengers to Jerusalem because they want to get permission from the council in Jerusalem to do the same thing. <sup>15</sup> On the day they get permission and eat what they want, God will allow you to destroy them.

<sup>16</sup> "So when I found out about all this, I ran away from them. God has sent me to do some important things with you that will shock the whole world whenever people hear about them. <sup>17</sup> I'm a God-fearing woman, and I worship the God of heaven day and night. So, General, I'll stay here with you. But I must go into the valley every night and pray to God. He will tell me when my people have sinned. <sup>18</sup> Then I'll report to you so that you can attack them with your entire army. None of them will be able to stand up against your attack. <sup>19</sup> Then I'll lead you through Judea all the way to Jerusalem. I'll place your throne in the center of the city, and you will lead the people, who are like sheep without a shepherd. Dogs won't even growl at you. God told me these things so that I would know about them in advance, and he sent me to report them to you."

<sup>20</sup> Holofernes and all his advisers liked what Judith said. They were stunned by her wisdom and said, <sup>21</sup> "No other woman in the whole world looks so beautiful or speaks so intelligently."

<sup>22</sup> Then Holofernes said to her, "God has done well to send you to our army so that we will have the power to win the battle and destroy those who despise King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>23</sup> You are both beautiful and eloquent. So if you do as you've said, your God will be my God. Furthermore, you will live in the palace of King Nebuchadnezzar and be famous throughout the world."

# 12

## Judith's Conduct in the Assyrian Camp

<sup>1</sup> Then Holofernes commanded his servants to bring Judith into his dining area and ordered them to serve her some of his own food and wine. <sup>2</sup> But Judith said, "I'm afraid I would be committing a sin if I ate any of your food. I'm sure that the food I brought with me will be enough for me to eat."

<sup>3</sup> Holofernes asked, "But if your food runs out, where can we get you more? None of your people are here with us."

**4** Judith replied, "General, I swear that my food won't run out before the Lord uses me to do what he has planned."

**5** Then Holofernes' advisers took Judith to her tent, where she slept until midnight. Just before dawn, she got up **6** and sent this message to Holofernes: "General, allow me to go out of the camp to pray." **7** So Holofernes ordered his bodyguards not to stop her. Judith stayed in the camp for three days. Each night she would go into the valley of Bethulia and bathe at the spring near the place where Holofernes had stationed soldiers. **8** When she had finished bathing, she would pray to the Lord God of Israel to guide her so that his people could be proud of themselves again. **9** After she had purified herself, she would return to the camp and stay in her tent until she ate her evening meal.

## Holofernes Has a Party

**10** On the fourth day that Judith was in the camp, Holofernes had a party. The party was for his servants only. He didn't invite any of his officers to attend. **11** Holofernes said to Bagoas, the eunuch in charge of his personal affairs, "Go to the Hebrew woman's tent. Since you take care of her, persuade her to come and have something to eat and drink with us. **12** It will really look bad if I let an attractive woman like this go without sleeping with her. If I can't get her into bed with me, she'll make fun of me."

**13** So Bagoas left Holofernes, went to Judith, and said, "Since you are such a beautiful woman, come quickly to the general's tent. He wants to honor you. He wants you to drink some wine with us, to enjoy yourself, and to become like the Assyrian women who serve Nebuchadnezzar in his palace."

**14** Judith replied, "How can I refuse the general's invitation? I'll do whatever he wants at once. Now I'll have something to brag about until the day I die."

**15** So Judith put on a gorgeous dress and all her jewelry. Her slave went ahead of her to spread lambskins on the ground in front of Holofernes. (Earlier, Bagoas had given Judith lambskins to sit on when she ate.)

**16** Then Judith went into Holofernes' tent and sat down. When Holofernes saw her, he became aroused. He had an uncontrollable desire to have sex with her and had been looking for an opportunity to seduce her from the first day he had seen her. **17** So Holofernes said to Judith, "Have a drink, and have some fun with us!"

**18** Judith replied, "I'll have a drink, General, because today has turned out to be the best day of my life." **19** Then, in front of Holofernes, she ate and drank what her slave had prepared for her. **20** Holofernes was so captivated by her that he drank a lot of wine, more than he had ever drunk on any one day in his entire life.

## 13

**1** When evening came, Holofernes' servants quickly left. Bagoas closed the tent from the outside to keep Holofernes' servants from coming in. The servants went to bed because the party had lasted a long time and everyone was very tired.

**2** So Judith was left alone in the tent with Holofernes, who had passed out on his bed because he was so drunk.

**3** Judith had told her slave to stand outside the bedroom and wait for her to come out. Judith told her that she would be going out to pray as she had done on the other nights. She had told Bagoas the same thing.

## Judith Cuts Off Holofernes' Head

**4** So everyone had left. No one else was in the bedroom. Then Judith stood beside Holofernes' bed and offered this silent prayer: "Lord, you are the all-powerful God. Protect me in what I'm going to do for the honor of Jerusalem." **5** Now is the time to help your people and to carry out my plan to destroy the enemies who have attacked us."

**6** Judith went to the bedpost near Holofernes' head and took down his sword. **7** She grabbed the hair on his head and prayed, "Give me strength now, Lord God of Israel!" **8** Then she struck his neck twice with all her might and cut off his head. **9** She rolled his body off the bed and pulled down the mosquito net from the bedposts. After this, she came out of the bedroom and gave Holofernes' head to her slave, **10** who put it in the food bag.

## Judith Returns to Bethulia

Then the two women left together to pray as they always did. They went through the camp, around the valley, and up the mountain to the gate of Bethulia. **11** From a distance Judith called out to the guards at the gate, "Open the gate! Open the gate! God, our God, is still with us. He has shown his strength in Israel and his power against our enemies today."

**12** When the people in the city heard Judith's voice, they hurried to the city gate and summoned their leaders. **13** All the people, from the least important to the most important, came running because they couldn't believe that Judith had come back. They opened the gate and welcomed the two women. Then they started a fire so that they could see, and they gathered around the women. **14** Judith shouted, "Praise God! Praise him! Praise God! He still shows his mercy to the people of Israel. He has used me to destroy our enemies tonight."

**15** Then Judith pulled Holofernes' head out of the bag and showed it to them. She said, "Look! Here's the head of Holofernes, the general of the Assyrian army! And here's the mosquito net under which he lay drunk! The Lord has used a woman to kill him. **16** I swear by the Lord, who lives and has protected me, that my good looks seduced Holofernes and led to his destruction. I swear that Holofernes didn't commit any sin that dishonored or shamed me."

**17** All the people were amazed. They bowed to worship God and said together, "We praise you, our God, because today you have treated your people's enemies with contempt."

**18** Then Uzziah said to Judith, "My dear friend, the Most High God has blessed you more than any other woman on earth. Praise the Lord God, who created heaven and earth! He has guided you so that you could cut off the head of our enemies' leader. **19** People will never forget to praise you when they remember God's power. <sup>g</sup>**20** May God honor you and bless you forever because you risked your life when our people were being humiliated. You did the right thing in God's sight by taking revenge on our enemies."

Everyone who was there said, "Amen! Amen!"

# 14

## Judith's Advice

**1** Then Judith said to the people, "Friends, listen to me! Take Holofernes' head, and hang it on the city wall. **2** At daybreak, when the sun comes up, every able-bodied man should grab his weapons. Pick an officer for the men, and go out of the city. Pretend you're going down to the plain to attack the Assyrian outpost. But don't actually go down. **3** The Assyrian soldiers will grab their weapons and hurry into the camp to alert their officers. The officers will rush into Holofernes' tent, but they won't find him. Then they will panic, and all the Assyrian soldiers will run for their lives. **4** You and everyone who lives in Israel should chase them and kill them as they retreat. **5** But before you do all this, bring Achior the Ammonite to me. I want Achior to identify the man who insulted both him and the people of Israel and who sent him here to die."

## Achior Is Converted

**6** So some people brought Achior from Uzziah's house. When Achior arrived and saw a man in the people's assembly holding Holofernes' head, he fainted and fell flat on his face. **7** When the people picked Achior up, he fell at Judith's feet out of respect for her and said, "People in every home in Judah will praise you, but people in other nations will become terrified when they hear your name. **8** Tell me everything you've done during the last few days."

With people all around her, Judith told Achior everything she had done from the time she left Bethulia until that very moment. **9** When she finished, the people shouted and filled the city with cheering. **10** Achior saw everything that the God of Israel had done, and he became a firm believer in God. So he was circumcised and became a member of the people of Israel. He's still a member today.

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<sup>g</sup> 13:19 Some manuscripts read "People will never forget your confidence in God when they remember God's power."

## Bagoas Finds Holofernes' Headless Body

**11** At dawn the people hung Holofernes' head on the wall. Then all the men grabbed their weapons and went out in groups to the mountain passes. **12** When the Assyrian soldiers saw them, they sent a message to their officers. Their officers went to inform the generals, captains, and all the other leaders. **13** The officers went to Holofernes' tent and said to Bagoas, the man in charge of Holofernes' personal affairs, "Wake up the general! The Hebrew slaves have become bold enough to come down to attack us, even though they can't win."

**14** Bagoas thought that Holofernes was sleeping with Judith. So he shook the curtains at the entrance to Holofernes' tent. **15** But when no one answered, Bagoas opened the curtains, went into Holofernes' bedroom, and found Holofernes' headless body lying over a footstool. **16** Bagoas screamed. He cried, groaned, and yelled as he tore his clothes in grief. **17** Then he went to the tent where Judith had been staying. When he didn't find her there, he rushed out to the soldiers and shouted, **18** "The slaves have tricked us! A Hebrew woman has brought disgrace on King Nebuchadnezzar's entire kingdom. Look! Holofernes is lying on the ground with his head cut off!"

**19** When the leaders of the Assyrian army heard this, they tore their clothes in grief. They were terrified, and their shouting and yelling echoed throughout the camp.

15

## The Israelites Chase the Assyrian Army

**1** When the soldiers in the tents heard about what had happened to Holofernes, they were shocked. **2** Overcome with fear and trembling, they scattered in every direction. They used all the roads through the mountains and the plain in their attempt to escape. No one waited for anyone else. **3** The soldiers who had camped in the hills around Bethulia also ran away. Then the Israelite soldiers ran after them.

**4** Uzziah sent messengers to the cities of Betomesthaim, Choba, and Kola and to every region in Israel to tell the people what had happened. He wanted everyone to chase the Assyrians and destroy them. **5** When the Israelites heard about this, they all joined together and attacked the Assyrians. They continued to kill the Assyrians all the way to Choba. The men from Jerusalem and the surrounding mountains also joined the fight because they had been told what had happened in the Assyrian camp. The men in Gilead and Galilee continued to slaughter the Assyrians all the way to the borders of Damascus.

**6** Meanwhile, the rest of the people of Bethulia went to the Assyrian camp and made themselves very rich by looting it. **7** When the Israelite soldiers returned from the slaughter, they took what was left. Even the people from the cities and villages in the mountains and on the plain got a lot of the loot because there was so much of it.

## The Victory Celebration in Bethulia

**8** Then the chief priest Joakim and the council, which represented the Israelites who lived in Jerusalem, went to Bethulia to see the good things that the Lord had done for Israel. They also came to see Judith and to wish her well. **9** When they met Judith, all of them praised her and said, "You've brought honor to Jerusalem! You've given Israel something to brag about, and our nation is very proud of you. **10** You've done all this by yourself. You've done good things for Israel, and God is pleased with what you've done. May you be praised in the presence of the Almighty Lord forever!"

And all the people said, "Amen!"

**11** All the people looted the Assyrian camp for 30 days. They gave Judith Holofernes' tent, all his silver dinnerware, beds, bowls, and furniture. Judith loaded some of these things on her mule. Then she hitched up her wagons and piled everything else on them.

**12** All the women of Israel gathered to see her. They praised her, and some of them performed a dance to honor her. Judith took branches and gave them to the women who were with her. **13** She and those who were with her were wearing

wreaths made of olive leaves on their heads. She went in front of all the people and led all the women in a dance. All the men of Israel followed fully armed. They, too, wore wreaths on their heads and sang hymns of praise.

## Judith's Song of Praise

**14** Judith gave thanks to God in front of all the people of Israel, and all the people loudly sang this song of praise with her.

# 16

**1** Judith sang:

Start singing to my God.

Sing to my Lord.

Use tambourines and cymbals.

Please him with a psalm of praise.

Honor him, and pray in his name.

**2** The Lord is a God who defeats armies.

He rescued me from those who were pursuing me.

He brought me back into his camp

and allowed me to stand in front of his people.

**3** The Assyrians came down from the northern mountains.

Their soldiers couldn't be counted.

They were so numerous that they blocked up the rivers.

Their cavalry covered the hills.

**4** They said they would burn up my territory,

kill my young men in battle,

smash my nursing infants on the ground,

capture my children,

and carry off my young women.

**5** The Lord Almighty used a woman to trick them.

**6** Young men didn't kill the Assyrians' mighty general.

Large monsters didn't strike him down.

Huge giants didn't attack him.

But Judith, Merari's daughter, used her beauty

to cut off his head.

**7** She brought honor to the suffering people of Israel

by taking off her widow's clothes

and by putting on perfume.

**8** She deceived the general

by tying a ribbon in her hair

and by wearing expensive clothes.

**9** Her sandals caught his eye.

Her beauty captivated him.

But a sword cut through his neck!

**10** The Persians trembled at her daring.

The Medes were terrified by her boldness.

- 11** At one time, my humble people cried.  
My weak people were afraid; they were terrified.  
They shouted to God,  
and the Assyrians retreated.
- 12** The descendants of slaves stabbed them  
and wounded them like runaway slaves.  
The Lord's army destroyed them.
- 13** I will sing a new hymn of praise to my God.  
Lord, you are great and glorious.  
Your strength is awesome, and no one can defeat you.
- 14** Let all your creation serve you.  
You spoke, and everything came into existence.  
You sent your Spirit, and he formed everything.  
No one can oppose what you say.
- 15** Mountains will be shaken off their foundations  
into the oceans.  
Rocks will melt like wax when you look at them, Lord.  
But you will continue to show mercy to those who fear you.
- 16** Fragrant offerings mean little to you.  
Pieces of fat given as whole burnt offerings mean even less.  
But those who fear you, Lord, are always important to you.
- 17** How horrible it will be for the nations that attack my people!  
The Lord Almighty will punish the people of those nations  
on judgment day.  
He will send fire and worms into their bodies,  
and they will cry in pain forever.

## The Victory Celebration in Jerusalem

**18** When the people arrived in Jerusalem, they worshiped God. As soon as they purified themselves, they sacrificed their burnt offerings and freewill offerings, and they presented their gifts. **19** Judith dedicated to God all of Holofernes' possessions, which the people had given her. She even dedicated the mosquito net that she had taken from Holofernes' bedroom as an offering to God. **20** For three months the people celebrated in Jerusalem in front of the holy place, and Judith stayed there with them.

## The End of Judith's Life

**21** After the celebration was over, all the people returned home. Judith went back to the city of Bethulia and lived there on her estate. For the rest of her life, she was honored throughout the country. **22** Many men desired her. But after her husband Manasseh was dead and buried, she never had sex for the rest of her life. **23** She became very famous and lived in her husband's house until she was 105 years old. She set her female slave free. Judith died in Bethulia and was buried in the same cave as her husband Manasseh. **24** The people of Israel mourned for her for seven days. Before she died, she divided her property between her closest relatives and Manasseh's closest relatives. **25** No one ever terrorized the Israelites again during Judith's lifetime or for a long time after her death.